PERISCOPE VIEW

Patron: Admiral Sir James Perowne KCVO KBE
President: Commodore Jim Perks CB

The Newsletter of the Barrow-in Furness Branch
Submariners Association

Issue No: 316 www.submarinersassociation.co.uk **November 2026**

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COVER PICTURE: THE TRAFALGAR DINNER

"Nothing in the world, nothing that you may think or dream of, or anyone may tell you, no arguments however specious, no appeals however seductive, must lead you to abandon that naval supremacy on which the life of our country depends."

WINSTON SPENCER CHURCHILL

EDITORIAL NOVEMBER 2026

Hello Everybody

Well that's the 125th Anniversary Year's events nearly all done and dusted – a very big thank you to all our Members and Friends who have helped with the Organisation and all those who attended to make the Barrow in Furness Parade and Events the great success that they were.

Now we are into the Remembrance events with this weekend's Submariners Remembrance Ceremonies in London to be followed in Barrow by the Crane Memorial at St John's Church on Barrow Island, the Railway Memorial at the Barrow Station, the Ceremony at the AE1/AE2 Memorial and, of course, the Barrow Remembrance Parade and Wreath Laying on Remembrance Sunday.

Before the Barrow Events we have the November Branch Meeting on Tuesday 3rd in the RBL Concert Room at 1930.

It's been a bit busy for the Submarine Service recently with HMS AGAMEMNON having left Barrow for Sea Trials, HMS ACHILLES welcoming her Sponsor at the Shipyard and the news that we now have three of the four VANGUARDS in the Patrol Cycle – one on patrol, one just back from patrol and the third on post refit trials and then preparing for Patrol with hopefully the days of '200 plus day patrols' at an end.

I hope you will all be able to attend the November Branch Meeting – come along and support the Committee and the Members and see all your 'oppos' and find out what is going on over the rest of the year. Meanwhile,

hopefully, you will find something interesting to read and enjoy in this Issue.. The November Branch Meeting will be held in the Concert Room at the Royal British Legion in Holker Street at 1930 on Tuesday 3rd November – see you all there – don't be late!
Best Regards,
Barrie

SECRETARY'S REPORT – NOVEMBER 2026

Hello all,
In early October we received the timeline from the SAC outlining their proposal for **The Submariners Association to potentially gain Charitable Status**.
It is important to emphasise that **no final decision has been made**.
The timeline sets out the process by which the SAC will gather the information required to properly consider the Association moving towards charitable status. This information will then be presented to the membership so that **members can make an informed decision and vote on whether the Association should move in this direction or not**.
The decision will be made by the membership and not by the SAC.
Proposed timeline
The current aim is to put the proposal to a **membership vote in September 2027**, with the result announced in **mid-October 2027**.
In the meantime, the SAC will continue to gather information and provide regular updates so that every member has the opportunity to understand what charitable status could mean for the Association before the vote takes place.
Keeping members informed
Updates will be provided to Branch Secretaries and **posted on the Association website every month**.
The SAC also aim to build a comprehensive **FAQ section within the Members' Area of the website**. This will provide members with the information they need to make their own informed decision when the time comes.
If you have a question that is not covered in the FAQ, please contact:
Vice-Chairman: vice-chairman@submarinersassociation.com
Secretary: secretary@submarinersassociation.com

On Friday 23rd of October, the Barrow Sea Cadets hosted their Trafalgar Ball, more on this from our Social Secretary in his report.
Coming up in November we have the following remembrance events;
This year's Crane Memorial will take place on **Friday the 6th of November** at St John's Church, Barrow Island.
10.40am – Arrival at St John's Church, Barrow Island
10.50am – Opening words and prayers
10.55am – Laying of the Wreaths
11.00am – 2 Minutes Silence signified by member of the Sea Cadets playing the bugle
11.05am – Closing words
11.15am – Refreshments at St John's Church
11.45am – Depart from St John's Church

On Saturday 7th of November, the Railway Service of Remembrance will be held at the Railway Station at 10:45am.

Also, on Saturday evening the Salvation Army are hosting a Festival of Remembrance starting at 7pm, please see the poster for details.

On Sunday 8th of November, we have the Remembrance Day Parades;
09:15am - AE1 & AE2 Memorial on Ramsden Square, David Matthews will be placing a cross for his Great Uncle, Petty Officer Stephen Gilbert who served on HMAS AE2 and sadly died as a prisoner of war, also attending will be David's cousin Mrs Mandy McCrone. David will be visiting for the weekend and would very much like to meet up prior to the parade if anyone is available.
10:45am – Town Hall Remembrance Parade to the Cenotaph for 10:56am
14:30pm – Ulverston Church Remembrance Service followed by the Parade at 15:30pm
Yours aye,
Julian (Jules) Talks
barrow.sa.secretary@gmail.com

SOCIAL SECRETARY REPORT - NOVEMBER 2026

Hi Mr Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,
October done and dusted and we had a few laughs.
We had our 125th submarine anniversary coupled with the AE1 & 2 memorials having had a revamp; new flag poles, new grass and looks the biz – thanks to all the people involved with that. If you haven't seen it pop along and take a gander. After the parade we all came back to the legion to witness the unveiling of the portrait of the King before we had a good social. Thanks to everyone who came along, donated and took part in the festivities.
On the 15th a few went along to the Hope and Anchor for rum, chip butties and a general laugh. Will try and fit another one of these in before Christmas.
Then last weekend about 15 of us attended the sea cadets Trafalgar night do (one of many held over the period). A fantastic night, well organised and lots of fun.
So what's coming up?
Some of us are disappearing down to London for the Submariners Remembrance Parade on the 1st of November.
We also have all our local remembrance parades on the 6th, 7th and 8th. Please come along to these and remember those who gave everything for this country; "Lest we forget".
Then we have the big one on Friday 18th of December, our annual Christmas party at the Legion. Bring a plate, a party attitude and tickets are on sale from Jules for the reduced cost of £5 per ticket.
Rounding the year off, we have our DTS break between Christmas and New Year, at Seaweed Corner; Sunday 27th from 1pm, food, free pint and a tot of rum to be had.

There won't be a members draw at the November meeting because I am down in London (apologies), but as always scratch cards will be available at £2 a go with the chance of winning £30, so dig deep this will fund Seaweed Corner – see Steve May.
Yours Aye
Alex

NOVEMBER BRANCH CALENDAR

Branch Meeting	Tues 3rd Nov
Committee Meeting	As Required

DECEMBER BRANCH CALENDAR

Branch Meeting	Tues 1st Dec
Committee Meeting	As required
Christmas Party	Fri 18th Dec
DTS Seaweed Corner	Sun 27th Dec

JANUARY 2027 BRANCH CALENDAR

Branch Meeting	Tues 5th Jan
Committee Meeting	As required

NOVEMBER BRANCH BIRTHDAYS

P. (Pete) Schofield	09/11/1946
G. (Gavin) Clelland	10/11/1963
James Hutton (A)	16/11/1934
I.A. (Ian) Clark	18/11/1945
G. (George) Boyle	20/11/1961

M.S. (Mike) Lacey	22/11/1946
T.J. (Trevor) Janes	29/11/1948
J. (Jeffrey) Thomas	30/11/1943
R. (Ralph) Wilson (A)	30/11/1947

Happy Birthday All!!

DISCLAIMER

This Newsletter is published by the Submariners Association (Barrow in Furness) and is © 2026 The opinions expressed in these pages are not necessarily the opinion of the Editor, The Submariners Association, the MoD, or the Submarine Service unless otherwise stated. The Submariners Association may not agree with the opinions expressed in this Newsletter but encourages publication as a matter of interest.
Nothing printed may be construed as policy or an official announcement unless so stated. Otherwise, the Association accepts no liability on any issue in this Newsletter.

SUBMARINE COMMISSIONING CREW LISTS

Do you have any? Submarine Commissioning, Paying Off, De-commissioning and Re-dedication Crew Lists – are still wanted, thank you very much. These Crew List are required for an ongoing project to compile a Chronological Record of Submariners. If you don't have any Crew Lists and you wish to be added to the Record you can always send me your individual details - where and when joined boats, rank or rate, boats served in - with dates if known – Official Numbers are always helpful as well.
I am looking for 'First Commission' Crew Lists as follows: PORPOISE, GRAMPUS, CACHALOT, WALRUS, OBERON, ONYX, ORPHEUS, ODIN, OTUS, UNICORN, AUDACIOUS and ANSON. Also looking for copies of Crew Lists for subsequent Commissions of any 'O' Class, 'P' Class or Nuclear Boat – SSN & SSBN. Crew Lists for any Commissioning or Decommissioning of any Diesel 'A,' 'S' or 'T' Class Boat refitting in Home Dockyards or in Malta, Singapore or Sydney are also required. Have a look through your records and 'Ditty Boxes' and see what you can find. You can contact me by E Mail, Snail Mail or Telephone
Thanks
Barrie Downer

REMEMBERING FORMER BARROW MEMBERS NOVEMBER

Montague Lee	1979
Raymond Hetherington	1994
Christopher Crossman	2002
John Graham	2003
Fred Scheunig	2006
Bill Cole	2006
John Byrth	2007
Tony Evans	2016
David Wilson	2017
Joseph Sharpe	2017
Alan West	2020
Robert (Bob) Faragher	2022
Bernie Riley	2024
Ken Brumby	2025

RESURGAM

NEWSLETTER CONTACT INFO

Do you have a story to tell or have information you feel should appear in the Newsletter - then ring Barrie Downer on 01229 820963 or, if you wish to send me an article, my Postal Address is 'The Firs', Dundalk Street, Barrow Island, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria LA14 2RZ. You may also send your contribution by e-mail frozennorth55@gmail.com. Come on – every Submariner has a story to tell – some more than one! Let's see yours in print!
Constructive suggestions about the Newsletter are also very welcome. The Newsletter will be published in the last week of each month i.e., the last week in November for the December 2026 Issue.
Also, please note that the SA National Newsletter 'In Depth' will be published on 1st January 2027 so, if you have anything for either Newsletter please ensure you have any information with me ideally by the 15th of the previous month to ensure its inclusion in the next issue. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition – keep them stories coming

ONLINE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE - UPDATE

By Peter Jeanneret

As promised in the last edition, we have now incorporated a new Memorials feature into the Online Book Of Remembrance. There are now 50 memorials listed, all fully populated with the OBOR People and Submarines. All data on Memorials (including the three Manning Port Naval Memorials), and Burial places in the Commonwealth War Graves database, have been captured for all people, and one can now see where they are buried, if known, and on what Memorials they are featured. Each Memorial has a page with details and a list of all People or Submarines featured on it. You can click from a Memorial to a Person and to his Submarine; from a Submarine to a Person and to his Memorials. Brilliant, and well worth spending some time looking at this.

Of the 5,945 people listed in OBOR, 1061 (18%) now have stories and 436 (7.3%) have photos the 498 Units with People, 188 (38%) have stories and 238 (48%) have photos. If any of you have the time, interest and familiarity with researching peoples' past then we would be delighted if you were able to join the team. Just contact Peter Jeanneret at obor@submarineremembrance.uk

EXTENDED SSBN PATROLS

Recently there has been much discussion about three Royal Navy Vanguard-class submarines being at sea. One has been on patrol for 198 days. The longest strategic deterrent patrol made by an Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine is 140 days, an anomaly due to uncommon circumstances for American boomers and that was a 2014 patrol by USS PENNSYLVANIA (SSBN-735) Gold Crew. The RN boomers have made a habit of hitting 200+ day patrols. Recent reported patrols exceeding 198 days for Vanguard-class boats include HMS VICTORIOUS with 207 days in 2021, HMS VANGUARD with 205 days in April 2026, HMS VANGUARD with 204 days in March 2025, and HMS VENGEANCE with 201 days in March 2024 and the latest Patrol (just completed) at 201 days. Having three boats in rotation now is a positive sign for the RN and, hopefully, future Patrols will be much shorter.

HMS ACHILLES welcomes her Sponsor for first time

From digital champion to champion of 100 men and women turning 7,000 tonnes of military hardware into one of the world's premier fighting machines.

Accompanied by ACHILLES Commanding Officer Cdr Bing Crosby (2nd right)
Baroness Lane Fox chats with BAE Personnel

For the first time the Sponsor of HMS ACHILLES saw her submarine when she visited the seventh and final Astute-class boat in the closing stages of construction.

Baroness Martha Lane Fox met both crew and some of the hundreds of people involved in turning charts, blueprints and computer plans into the most advanced submarine the Royal Navy has ever operated.

Accompanied by Achilles Commanding Officer Commander 'Bing' Crosby, Astute Programme Director, Pete Tumelty and Managing Director, Submarine Operations, Dean Armstrong, the

Baroness met members of the Boat 7 team in the Devonshire Dock Hall in Barrow and also visited crew accommodation to meet the ship's company.

Baroness Lane Fox made her name as founder of website Lastminute.com, served as the Government's 'digital champion', established the Gov.uk series of websites, served on the boards of numerous businesses including M&S and Channel 4, and is currently President of the British Chambers of Commerce, Chancellor of The Open University and patron of several charities.

As Achilles' Sponsor, Baroness Lane Fox will be a champion for the boat and all who serve aboard, attend key moments in the submarine's career – naming, launch, commissioning, and significant anniversaries – and work with affiliates and the public to help raise the profile and understanding of the Submarine Service which is celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2026.

This was her first chance to get to grips with a programme described as on a par with the Space Shuttle in terms of complexity, engaging with the build team and crew to gain insight into daily life and operations onboard the vessel as it progresses towards key milestones such as naming and launch.

She said her introduction to Achilles had been "epic" with the dedication, passion and commitment of everyone involved in the boat shining through.

"Seeing Achilles for the first time was a real career highlight," Baroness Lane Fox added. "The thing that blew my mind was combination of macro and micro – from the scale of the National Endeavour around nuclear, to the micro of the front-end work, it was fascinating to see close up. "My main intention now is to try and raise the profile of Barrow and the submarine community in the places I operate."

Few people are more passionate about the Astute programme than Achilles' Commanding Officer who proudly describes his boat simply as "last of class, best of class".

Cdr Crosby continued: "This first visit strengthened the bond between the Baroness and everyone associated with Achilles and gave her a valuable insight into the dedication, professionalism, and daily life of the boat team and crew. It is another key milestone as we look to bring Achilles to life.

"The Baroness's engagement and support are greatly appreciated and will continue to inspire and motivate all personnel onboard. We look forward to maintaining this important relationship in the future. Thank you to all involved for supporting this strategically important endeavour."

Baroness Lane Fox was also shown around the Submarines Academy for Skills and Knowledge and Portland Walk campus, a former shopping centre which has been turned into a cutting-edge/experimental training and learning complex.

Seeing Achilles for the first time was a real career highlight. It was fascinating to see close up

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HMS ACHILLES DELAY

The Ministry of Defence has declined to estimate how far the completion of the submarine HMS ACHILLES has slipped as a result of the 2024 fire in the Devonshire Dock Hall at Barrow-in-Furness, according to an answer given in Parliament.

Ben Obese-Jecty, the Conservative member for Huntingdon, asked for the estimated length of the delay, following an answer of 8 September. Luke Pollard, the Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry, said:

"Work to recover from the impact of the fire in the Devonshire Dock Hall is progressing well. ACHILLES the seventh and last boat of the class, remains at an advanced stage of build in Barrow-in-Furness. "The planned in-service dates for Royal Navy submarines are withheld as disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness, or security of the Armed Forces."

Because in-service dates for Royal Navy submarines are withheld, the schedule ACHILLES was working to before the fire is not public either, so the size of any slip cannot be worked out from the published record, and the department gave neither a length of delay nor a cost.

The Devonshire Dock Hall is the covered building hall at Barrow where British submarines are assembled, and the fire there in 2024 interrupted work on the yard's output. ACHILLES is the seventh and final boat of the Astute class. The Astute class are nuclear powered attack submarines armed with Spearfish torpedoes and Tomahawk land attack cruise missiles, built by BAE Systems at Barrow-in-Furness around a Rolls-Royce pressurised water reactor fuelled for

the life of the boat. Seven were ordered, and the first of class, HMS ASTUTE, commissioned in 2010

By Craig Langford

Trained as a mechanical engineer, Craig took an unconventional route into journalism, bringing with him a rare technical precision and analytical depth that continues to set his reporting apart.

Early arrival for first AUKUS nuclear sub to Australia

Naval Group rolls out 5th Suffren-class attack submarine

Published on 16/10/2026

By Xavier Vavasseur

5th Barracuda-type submarine rolls out. Naval Group picture.

Naval Group has rolled out RUBIS (S639), the fifth Barracuda type nuclear attack submarine (SSN), transferring the vessel to its shiplift in Cherbourg ahead of sea trials for the French Navy.

Naval Group press release

On 16 October 2026, the fifth submarine of the Barracuda programme has left its construction hall in order to be transferred to the DME floating platform-type shiplift, in the presence of Catherine Vautrin, French minister for the Armed Forces and Veterans. Completion work will continue, along with a series of trials carried out at quayside and then at sea, prior to delivery to the French Navy.

Led by the French defence procurement agency (DGA) in partnership with the French Atomic Energy and Alternative Energy Commission (CEA) for the nuclear reactors part, the Barracuda programme aims to replace the six RUBIS-class SSNs put into service in the French Navy from the 1980s. The programme includes the delivery of six SSNs by 2030, four of which have already been delivered between November 2020 and June 2026.

"It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that we today transferred the RUBIS, the fifth Suffren-class nuclear attack submarine, to its launch platform. This crucial milestone comes just 17 months after that of the nuclear attack submarine De Grasse, a symbol of our commitment to our customers. In an extremely challenging operational environment, manufacturers must rise to the occasion to deliver to sailors the ships they need to carry out their missions. This event is also an opportunity to recognize the integrated teamwork with the DGA, our partners, and the crew—the foundation of our collective success",

PIERRE ÉRIC POMMELLET, CHAIRMAN AND CEO OF NAVAL GROUP.

The programme calls on the expertise of all Naval Group's sites, as well as on the industrial facilities of TechnicAtome and numerous partner companies. Naval Group is in charge of the production of these submarines, from their design to their construction, as well as the

manufacture of the main components of the nuclear boilers which are developed and produced with TechnicAtome. Naval Group is also in charge of providing logistical support and maintaining the submarines in Toulon.
This programme is the result of the collective work between Naval Group and hundreds of partners of the defence industrial and technological base. A total of 3,000 men and women (including around 800 from Naval Group subcontractors) are contributing to the design and production of these submarines.

The roll out of RUBIS. Note the X-rudder arrangement and the covered pump jet. Note also the stern section of the final boat in the Suffren-class, CASABIANCA, on the left. Naval Group picture.

Naval News comments:

The future Suffren-class submarine RUBIS (S639) is named in honour of a legendary World War II Free French Saphir-class minelaying submarine of the same name. The word rubis is French for the precious gemstone ruby.
When France fell in 1940, the original Saphir-class RUBIS joined General Charles de Gaulle's Free French Naval Forces (FNFL). Operating out of Dundee, Scotland alongside the British Royal Navy, it became a critical asset in the Atlantic and North Sea. Over the course of the war, the WWII RUBIS conducted 28 operational patrols and laid nearly 700 mines. These mines successfully sank or damaged over 20 Axis vessels, including German auxiliary submarine hunters, cargo ships, and minesweepers. Due to its immense contribution to the Allied war effort, General Charles de Gaulle made the RUBIS a Companion of the Ordre de la Libération (Order of Liberation) on October 14, 1941.
Rubis (S639) is set to conduct alpha trials by the Summer of 2027 and is expected to be delivered to the French Navy by the end of 2027.
With the final submarine in the class, CASABIANCA (S640), nearing the end of production, the DGA and Naval Group are now increasingly focus on "Evol SNA": the evolution roadmap for the Suffren-class which will keep these new attack submarines up-to-date over the next 30 years. In addition, Naval News understands that DGA and Naval Group are already working on the next class of French SSNs known for now as "SNA3G" for third generation SSN. However, this is not yet a program.

New nuclear sub design review finished ahead of schedule
By Craig Langford
UK Defence Journal
October 22, 2026

The SSN-AUKUS Preliminary Design Review was conducted in June and concluded on 1 July, three months earlier than the September date it had been expected to meet, according to an answer given in Parliament.

Ben Obese-Jecty, the Conservative member for Huntingdon, asked for what reason the scheduled September 2026 Preliminary Design Review date for SSN-AUKUS was missed and what the new date was.

Luke Pollard, the Minister of State for Defence, said: "The SSN-AUKUS Preliminary Design Review was conducted in June 2026 and concluded on 1 July as part of the ongoing Detailed Design and Long Lead (D2L2) phase of the programme."

A Preliminary Design Review on a submarine programme locks the overall configuration before detailed design work proceeds at scale, covering the hull form, the compartment arrangement, the propulsion and combat system integration and the weight and stability margins. Passing it allows long lead items to be ordered against a stable design, which matters on a programme where reactor components and large forgings have ordering lead times measured in years.

SSN-AUKUS is the replacement for the Astute class and the design Australia will also build, developed by BAE Systems at Barrow with Rolls-Royce providing the reactor plant and a trilateral arrangement governing the common elements. The boat is larger than Astute, carries vertical launch capacity and is intended to accommodate uncrewed systems alongside torpedoes and cruise missiles.

Detailed Design and Long Lead runs to 2028, and the programme is midway through it, with Pollard confirming in a separate answer the same day that the number of boats will be settled before the phase closes. Steel will be cut on the first British hull next year, a milestone this publication has covered as it approached.

Design reviews slipping to the right has been the pattern across large defence programmes for a generation, which is what prompted the question. Submarine design on this programme has run with a deliberately conservative schedule built around the Barrow drumbeat, and Dreadnought holds the priority on the same design and build resources.

Australia's Osborne yard in South Australia will build to the same design, and the Australian Submarine Agency has its own review gates aligned to the British ones, so an early conclusion on the British side gives both partners margin before detailed design work peaks. Rolls-Royce in Derby is producing reactors for both classes from a doubled site.

Obese-Jecty's question assumed a missed milestone and received a date that had already passed. The review closed on the first of July and the programme has been running on from it since.

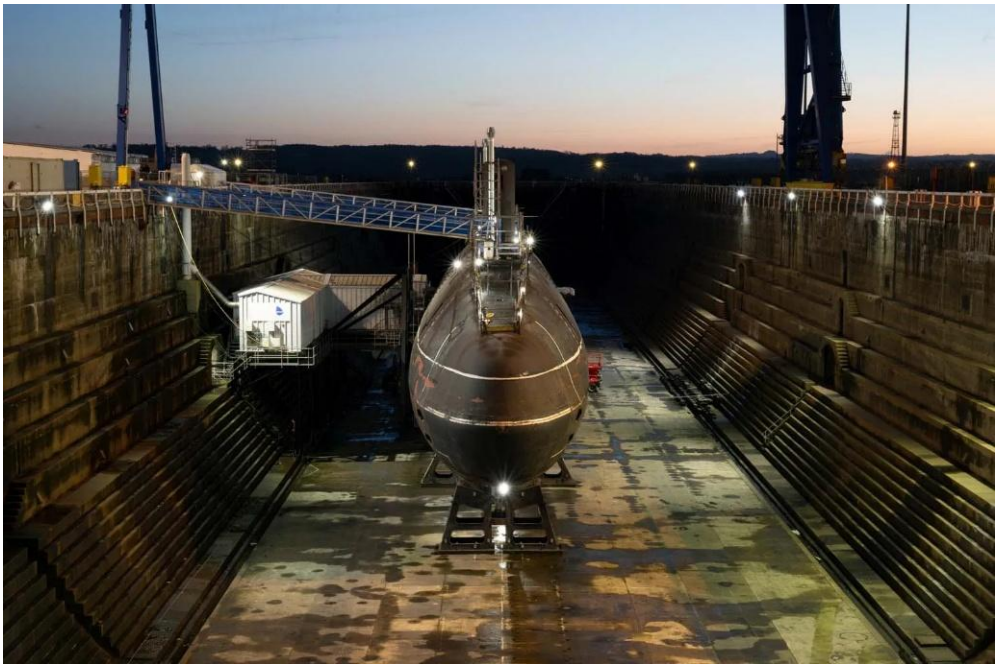
Devonport to restart submarine defuelling at 14 Dock

From the UK Defence Journal

Recommissioning 14 Dock at Devonport will allow legacy submarine defuelling to restart, paid for from the £7.1 billion going into the naval base over the next decade under Project Royal Oak, according to an answer given in Parliament. Ben Obese-Jecty, the Conservative member for Huntingdon, asked what progress the department has made in re-establishing a safe and secure defuelling capability at Devonport Dockyard.

Luke Pollard, the Minister of State for Defence, said: "As part of Project Royal Oak, £7.1 billion will be invested in HMNB Devonport over the next decade. Part of this investment is being used to complete the 14 Dock recommissioning programme, which will enable the recommencement of legacy submarine defueling activity."

Defuelling at Devonport stopped in 2004, and the submarines that have decommissioned since then have been held afloat with their fuel still aboard, tied up in the Hamoaze and requiring crews, monitoring and maintenance for decades after their operational lives ended. Restarting the capability is the step that unlocks the rest of the dismantling process, since a boat cannot be broken up until its reactor fuel has been removed.



The Submarine Dismantling Project has been running since 2011 and demonstrated the later stages at Rosyth, where Swiftsure was taken apart as the trial vessel and the work was completed last year. The Devonport boats have been waiting on the defuelling step, and the Public Accounts Committee and the National Audit Office have both examined the cost of storing them.

Project Royal Oak is the wider rebuild of the naval base infrastructure that the submarine flotilla depends on, and it covers dock recommissioning, deep maintenance facilities and the shore support the Astute and Dreadnought classes will need through their lives. The programme was mapped out this year at around £26 billion across the naval bases, with Devonport taking the £7.1 billion share.

Devonport's role is changing as Faslane consolidates the operational submarine flotilla, with the Plymouth base holding deep maintenance, refits and now the disposal pipeline. This publication reported recently that the Navy is looking to accelerate the Devonport Submarine upgrades, and that more refit work is being done at Faslane while the Devonport docks are rebuilt.

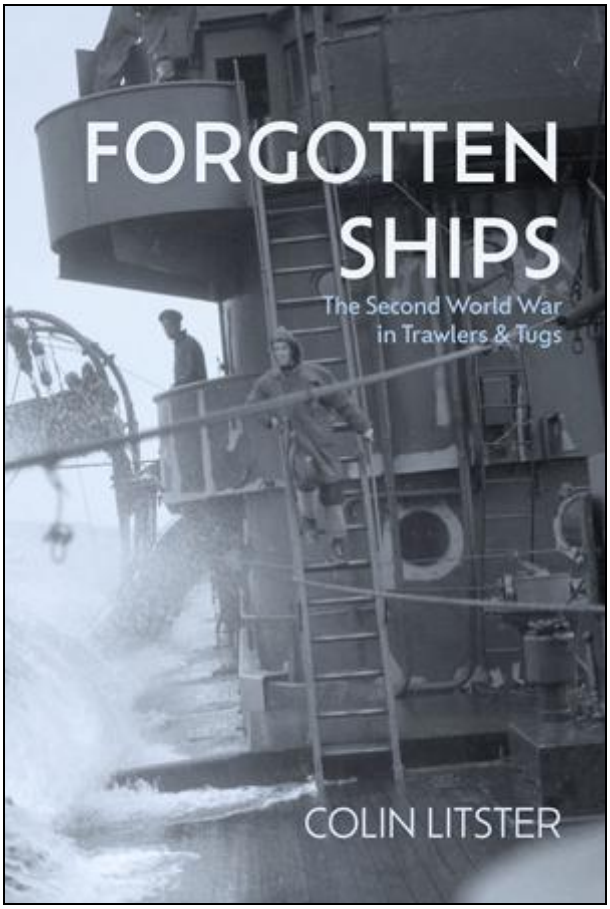
BOOKS

Forgotten Ships

The Second World War in Trawlers and Tugs

By Colin Litster

Forgotten Ships uncovers one of the most overlooked stories of the war at sea. While battleships and destroyers dominate the history books, it was humble trawlers and rescue tugs that escorted convoys, hunted submarines and rescued damaged ships. This is their story. At its heart is Alexander Litster, a peacetime yachtsman thrust into the command of an armed trawler at the outbreak of war. His baptism of fire came during the Norwegian campaign, where six relentless days under attack from the Luftwaffe pushed both ship and crew to the limit. He would go on to serve in the Battle of the Atlantic, patrol the icy waters north of Iceland, hunt the enemy above the Arctic Circle and take part in the daring operation to disable the coal mines of Spitzbergen. Transferred to the Royal Navy's Rescue Tug Service, Litster faced a different kind of battle. From towing torpedoed merchant ships to safety in the Caribbean to hazardous salvage missions in the Indian Ocean, he and his crews undertook dangerous operations that rarely earned headlines but were essential to the Allied war effort. His wartime service culminated in one of the longest towing operations of the entire conflict. Drawing on private papers, official records and a wealth of previously unpublished photographs, Forgotten Ships is both a gripping wartime biography and a compelling account of the remarkable vessels and courageous men whose vital contribution to victory has been largely forgotten. A former bookseller now working with adults with learning difficulties, Colin Litster grew up listening to his grandfather's stories of a life at sea.



Paperback ISBN 978 18499 57298 Price £19.99, €23.99, $29.99

Dreadnought reactor still on schedule, minister says

By George Allison - October 22, 2026

Ministers have confirmed that good progress is being made in developing and manufacturing the Rolls-Royce PWR3 reactor for the Dreadnought class submarines, and that reactor components remain on course to support the first boat entering service in the early 2030s as planned, according to an answer given in Parliament.

Ben Obese-Jecty, the Conservative member for Huntingdon, asked the Secretary of State for Defence what progress he had made on delivering the Rolls Royce PWR3 reactor for DREADNOUGHT. Luke Pollard replied: "Good progress is being made in developing and manufacturing the PWR3 reactor for the Dreadnought Class submarines. The Ministry of Defence continues to work closely with Rolls-Royce Submarines to ensure delivery of the reactor components in time to support DREADNOUGHT entering service in the early 2030s as planned." PWR3 is the first wholly new British submarine reactor design since PWR2 entered service in the Vanguard class in the 1990s, developed by Rolls-Royce Submarines at Derby with design input drawn from American practice under the Mutual Defence Agreement. The plant is intended to run for the life of the boat without refuelling, which removes the mid-life refuelling docking that Vanguard required and changes the availability arithmetic across a four boat force.

Rolls-Royce has doubled its Derby site under a contract worth around nine billion pounds covering reactors for both Dreadnought and SSN-AUKUS and has been recruiting at a rate the company has not managed since the Cold War. Reactor components are among the longest lead items on any submarine, so they drive the build schedule at Barrow. Dreadnought replaces the Vanguard class on continuous at-sea deterrent patrol, four boats carrying Trident D5 missiles, with the first entering service in the early 2030s after a programme the National Audit Office has repeatedly flagged for schedule and cost pressure. The Vanguards are already serving well beyond their design lives, and patrol lengths have stretched past six months as a result.

Missing German WW2 U-boat found 82 years on

The U-boat was scuttled by its own crew after it was attacked by the Royal Navy in July 1944

By Johnny Rutherford and Britta Zeltmann, Devon

A German submarine that went missing during World War Two after being damaged by the Royal Navy has been discovered 82 years on. Plymouth dive team 'Gasperados' identified the U-672 about 20 miles (32km) off Salcombe, Devon, after it was discovered by a deep sea diving team from Portland in August at a depth of about 230ft (70m). The vessel was attacked by HMS BALFOUR in July 1944 but was scuttled by its 52 crew - all of whom survived. A navy log showing the sinking had incorrect coordinates, resulting in it not being found until recently. Members of 'Gasperados' said they were "really pleased" they could help identify the vessel. 'Gasperados' diver Dominic Robinson said: "Once we started moving around it and I started seeing the individual features - I saw the snorkel, I saw the conning tower, all those kind of things - I knew that we were going to get the video needed to identify it, so I was really pleased about that." After its attack, the U-boat was left leaking underwater. Its commander waited for as long as possible before making the decision to blow the tanks and bring the sub up to give its crew a last chance of survival. Robinson said they "managed to get it to the surface" before getting into their life rafts for survival. "They were bobbing around in the sea and then the very next day they were found by British aircraft, British vessels and then taken away to the prisoner of war camp," he explained. German World War Two historian Dr Axel Niestle, who specialises in U-boats, said the wreck "was in the correct position" but, "due to a clerical error in the documents", had a position recorded which differed "some 46 miles (74km) from the actual position". The surviving crewmembers returned to Germany after the war, including the U-boat's skipper. Robinson said he had spoken to his family, who said he lived a "long and happy life". He added: "They just said how proud he would have been and how pleased he would have been to know that it had been found at last."

SUBMARINERS 'CROSSED THE BAR' REPORTED IN OCTOBER 2026 (Information from all available sources)

Reported Via	Date CTB	Name	Rank/Rating	Official No.	Age	Submarine Service
We Remember Submariners	2nd February 2022	John Martin Cook	Petty Officer (SSM)	D161644	66	Submarine Service from 1977 to 1997 in RESOLUTION (S) 1979 to 1992) & VANGUARD (P) (1992 & on Commissioning 1st Commission Crew at Barrow in Furness on 14th August 1993 to 1997) Invalided 1997
We Remember Submariners	26th September 2026	Leslie (Biffo) Smalley	TBA	TBA	TBA	Served in OTUS, SCEPTRE (AUTEC 1996 & 1997) & SOVEREIGN
Espana Levante Branch Member No. 6366	1st October 2026	Barry J Alford	Chief MEM(L)	P/M 982814	83	Submarine Service from 1966 to 1990 in THERMOPYLAE (1967), OLYMPUS (1967 to 1969), ODIN (1972 to 1973), OBERON (1973 to 1975), OLYMPUS (1975 to 1978) & OPPORTUNE (1980 to 1982)
Gosport Branch Member No. 1303 (Lapsed 2001)	1st October 2026	Darryl (Paddy) Uprichard	Leading Weapons Electrical Mechanic (O)	D186407H	63	Submarine Service in WALRUS, CONQUEROR, VALIANT, ORPHEUS, ONYX & UPHOLDER
We Remember Submariners	3rd October 2026	Mark Maddison	Able Seaman (Sonar) (SM)	D200066L	TBA	Submarine Service in SWIFTSURE
We Remember Submariners & Friends of SM Museum	3rd October 2026	Garry Arnold Newton	Captain (X) (SM)	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service from 1982 to 2013 in DOLPHIN, ORACLE, REPULSE (P) (IL). CSST, FOSM Staff, SM1, VANGUARD (IL), CSST, VIGILANT (Gold), MOD London, NATO Brussels & Fleet Commander (Ops) Also served as Naval Attache Moscow (twice)
We Remember Submariners	6th October 2026	David Ian (Tiny) Lister	Lt Commander (SL) (X) (SM)	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service from 1976 to 1983 in DOLPHIN (1976), VALIANT (1976 to 1977), OPPORTUNE (1978), SPARTAN (TASO 22nd September 1979 to 1981), OPOSSUM (IL 14th November 1981 to 1983) Also served in HMS SOBERTON
We Remember Submariners & Gosport Branch Member No. 4399	7th October 2026	Christopher R (Smudge) Smith	Petty Officer Marine Engineering Mechanic (M)	D126578Q	70	Submarine Service from 1975 to 1996 in RORQUAL, ORPHEUS, OBERON & ODIN

We Remember Submariners	7th October 2026	Graham Donald McEwan	Commander (E) (MESM)	CO19699D	75	Submarine Service including SUPERB (additional on Commissioning on 6th January 1975), SOVEREIGN (1982 NL), TIRELESS (19687 to 1989 NL) & MoD Bath (1991 NL) Also served in FEARLESS (1975 NL)
We Remember Submariners	12th October 2026	Ian Nicholas Britten	Lt Commander (E) (MESM)	TBA	76	Submarine Service including RENOWN (1976 NL), RNEC (1982 NL), MoD London (1989 NL) Formerly at Office of Nuclear Regulation Also served in SSKs
We Remember Submariners	17th October 2026	Gary Cahill	Chief Petty Officer	D211294H	TBA	Submarine Service from 2nd July 2002 to 17th October 2026 in VENGEANCE, VIGILANT, VICTORIOUS, FOST (N) & NEPTUNE (Nuclear Repair)
We Remember Submariners	26th October 2026	David Howe				Not Reported
Friend of SM Museum	29th October 2026	John Patrick Windsor Middleton CB	Rear Admiral (E) (MESM	TBA	88	Submarine Service from 1960 to 1991 in DOLPHIN (1964 to 1965), ADAMANT (1965), AMBUSH (1965 to 1967), RNC Greenwich (1967 to 1968), CHURCHILL (1967 to 1969), WARSPITE (1969 to 1972), SM10 (1972 to 1973), DPT (SM) (1974 to 1976), NDC Latimer (1976 to 1977), BLAKE (1977 to 1979), DN M & T (Eng) (1979 to 1981, CSO (E) to FOSM (1981 to 1983), CO NP2010 (Falklands) (1983 to 1984), CND (1984 to 1986), MoD DGSM (DISM) (1986 to 1989) & CSO (E) to CINCFLEET (1989 to 1992)
We Remember Submariners	October 2026	Ian Burbridge	Chief Petty Officer MEM	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service including COURAGEOUS